

The President's Daily Brief

27 February 1973

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

27 February 1973

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In Laos the level of fighting continues to decline amid signs that some North Vietnamese units believe they will be returning home soon. (Page 1)

Canada has warned it may pull out of the peace-keeping operation in Vietnam if the cease-fire does not become effective. (Page 2)

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Libya

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(Page 3)

25X1

In Chile, delay in President Allende's plan to provide large stocks of food to low-income consumers before next Sunday's congressional elections probably has lost some votes for the government coalition. (Page 4)

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Hard bargaining seems in prospect at the preparatory talks for a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe which resumed yesterday in Helsinki. (Page 5)

Annex

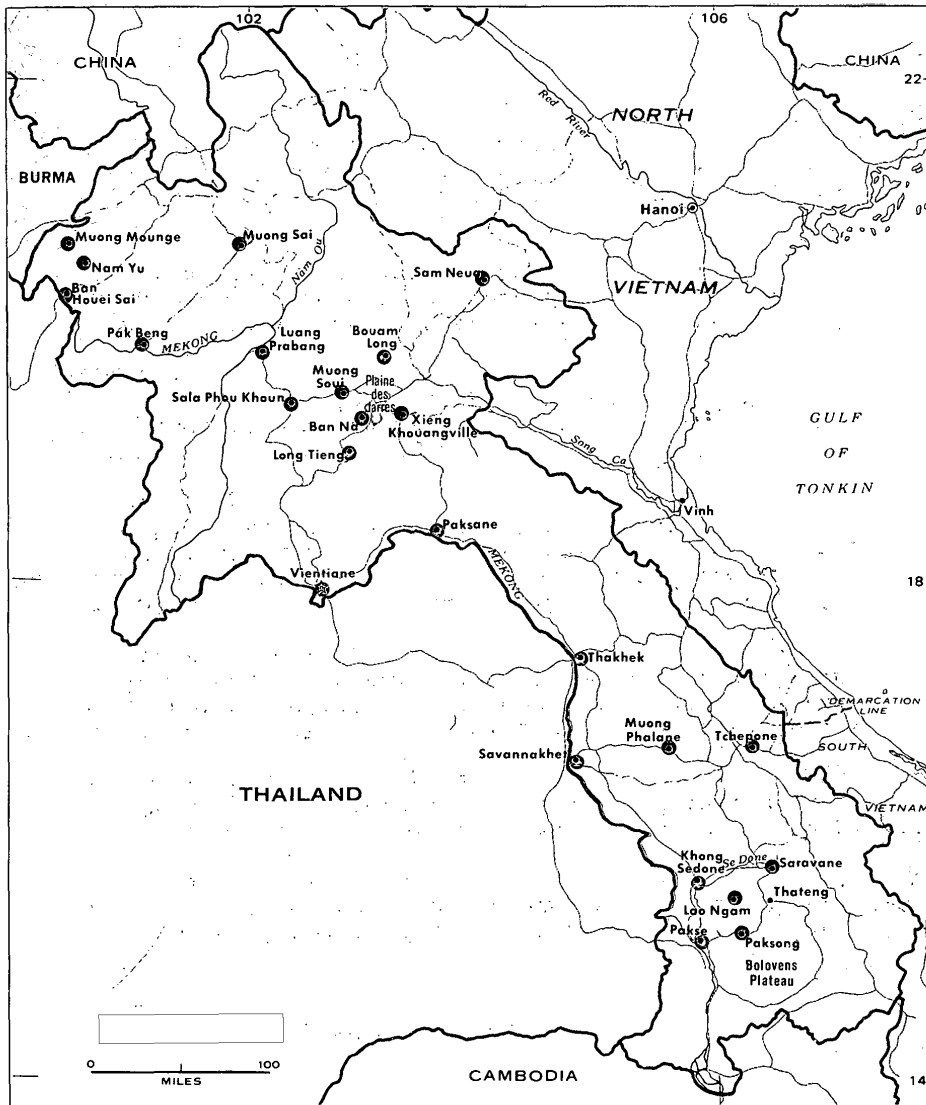
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LAOS



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LAOS

The level of fighting continues to decline amid signs that some North Vietnamese units believe they will be returning home soon.

In the south, an irregular company near Thateng dispersed after receiving heavy shelling; otherwise only minor clashes near Khong Sedone and isolated shellings west of Paksong have marred the cease-fire during the past two days. Communist troops in the central panhandle on 25 February attacked a government unit along Route 13 north of Thakhek for the second time in three days and again forced the irregulars to fall back. Near Muong Phalane, however, radio conversations between North Vietnamese units have mentioned preparations for returning to North Vietnam. The troops involved in these intercepts have told villagers in the area that some units would be leaving as soon as Pathet Lao replacements arrived. In the area of the Plaine des Jarres, where Communist gunners continued to shell government positions in the hills near Xieng Khouangville, North Vietnamese radio messages suggested that some units think that they will be leaving this area also.


No orders to North Vietnamese units to withdraw have been intercepted, however, and no major North Vietnamese units have been detected pulling back toward the North Vietnamese border.

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CANADA

Foreign Minister Sharp told the International Conference on Vietnam yesterday that Canada might pull out of the peace-keeping operation as early as 30 March if the cease-fire does not become effective. Sharp based his presentation on Canada's frustrations as a member of the defunct International Control Commission and warned that Canada would not put up with such a situation this time.

Sharp's statement must be viewed in the larger context of Prime Minister Trudeau's difficulty of leading a minority government.

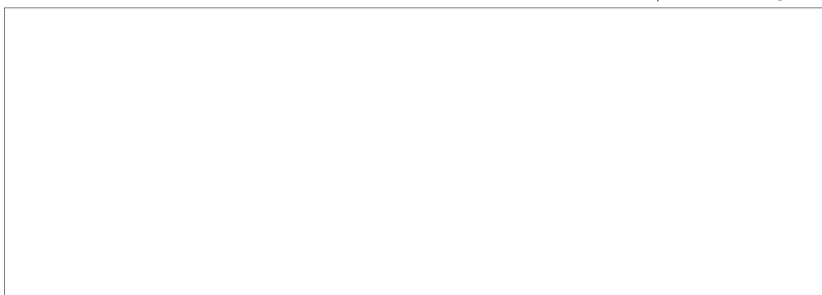


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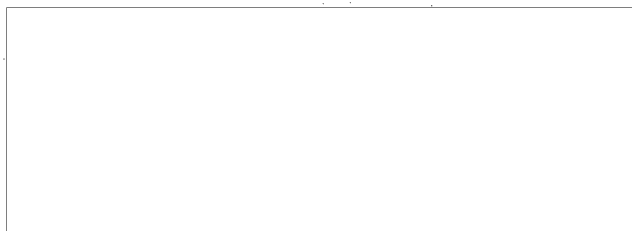
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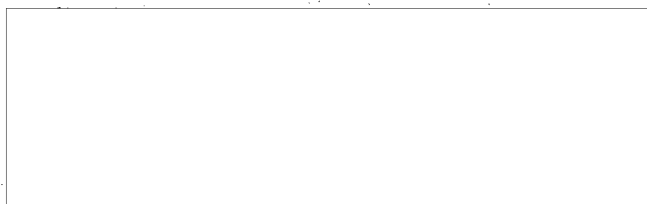
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CHILE

Socialists and other extremist functionaries who largely control food distribution have resisted efforts by Air Force General Bachelet, recently appointed chief of the distribution program, to organize an effective national system.

The result has been to delay President Allende's plan to provide large stocks of food to low-income consumers before next Sunday's congressional elections. The Socialists' tactics have again stirred up animosities between them and the Communists and have probably lost some votes for the government coalition.

Further pursuing their hard line against the military and the Communists, the Socialists are blaming the military for the failure of the supply system, and, in collaboration with other extremists, are inciting slum clashes over the allocation of food.

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NOTES

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European Security Conference: Soviet officials have expressed disappointment over the slow pace of preparatory talks for a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe which resumed in Helsinki yesterday after a two-week recess. Moscow appears to have scaled down its original expectations and will probably concentrate on what it regards as the central issues--endorsement of the inviolability of frontiers and approval of a post-conference consultative organ. The West, on the other hand, wants the agenda spelled out in some detail before making commitments on the timing and location of the actual conference. Hard bargaining now seems in prospect.

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CANADA



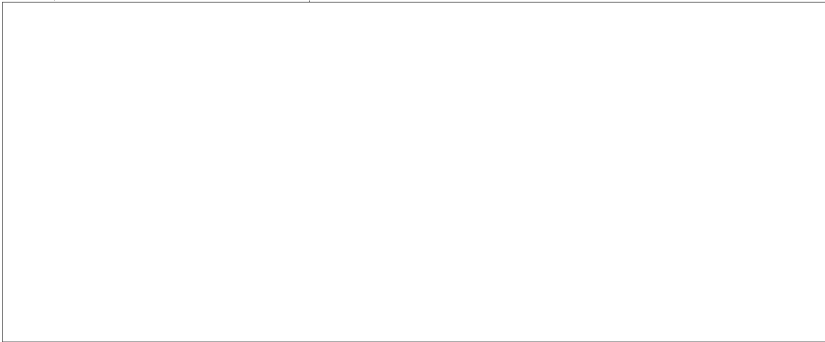
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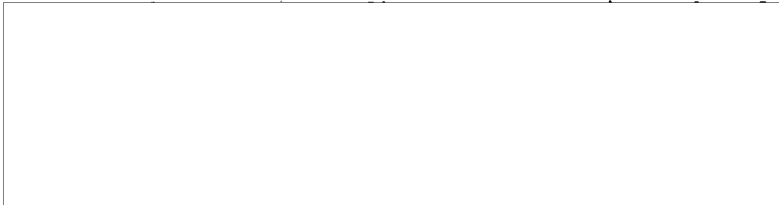
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